

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1 and 6 have been amended. Claim 7 has been cancelled. Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 are pending and under consideration.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

The Applicants extend their thanks to the Examiner for the courtesy shown to their representative during the phone call on October 17, 2007 directed to advancing prosecution of the present application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 112

Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner noted that in claims 1 and 6 the phrases “the portion of the retainer body adjacent each pocket” and “the radial thickness of the retainer body not adjacent each pocket” lacked antecedent basis. Appropriate correction has been made to claims 1 and 6.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 102 and 103

Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Mutoh et al. (US 6,068,408) (hereinafter “Mutoh ‘408”).

Claims 2 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutoh ‘408 in view of Mutoh et al. (US 6,074,099) (hereinafter “Mutoh ‘099”).

Claims 3 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutoh ‘408 in view of Yamamoto et al. (US 2003/0012461) (hereinafter “Yamamoto”).

Claims 1-3 and 5

Amended claim 1 recites: “... a ring-shaped or arcuate resin-made retainer body having inner and outer peripheral surfaces opposite to each other, said inner and outer peripheral surfaces defining a first radial thickness ... wherein the radial sides are formed in a thick walled portion having a radial thickness greater than the first radial thickness of the retainer body.” Support for this amendment may be found in the preamble of claim 1 and Figure 1.

It is respectfully submitted that in its amended form, claim 1 clearly recites that the retainer body is resin-made and further that the radial sides are formed in a thick walled portion

having a radial thickness greater than the first radial thickness of the retainer body. In contrast to claim 1, Mutoh '408 shows that the resin-made main portion 7 of Mutoh '408 has the same radial thickness of the pocket 8. Although, Mutoh '408 shows in Figure 11 a thin walled portion between the elastic pieces 12 disposed on the main portion 7, it is respectfully submitted that this thin portion does not obviate the technical feature of claim 1 where the radial sides have a radial thickness greater than the retainer body. In Mutoh '408, The elastic pieces 12 have a radial thickness equal to the radial thickness of the main portion 7.

This technical feature of claim 1 where the thickness of the retainer body is such that the radial thickness of the general portion of the retainer body is smaller than the radial thickness of the radial sides of the retainer body makes it possible to effectively suppress rubbing sounds which would be generated as a result of contact between the retainer and an inner peripheral surface of an outer race and/or an outer peripheral surface of an inner race, particularly in the case of application to a bearing having a large diameter and a small wall thickness. Further, when the general portion of the retainer body has a relatively small wall thickness, lubricant such as grease can be retained in a gap between the retainer and the inner peripheral surface of the outer race and/or the outer peripheral surface of the inner race for the smooth introduction of such lubricant into the pocket. Because of this, not only can lubrication at those areas of sliding contact be maintained advantageously in a favorable condition, but any undesirable generation of vibrations and noises from those areas of contact can also be further suppressed efficiently.

Claims 2, 3 and 5 are dependent on claim 1 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reason.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claim 6

Amended claim 6 recites: "...a ring-shaped or arcuate resin-made retainer body having inner and outer peripheral surfaces opposite to each other, said inner and outer peripheral surfaces defining a first radial thickness ... wherein the fore and aft portions of the retainer body adjacent each pocket are formed as a thick walled portion having a radial thickness greater than the first radial thickness of the retainer body." Support for this amendment may be found in the preamble of claim 6 and Figure 1. The Office Action relies on Mutoh '408 to discuss the feature of claim 6 where the fore and aft portions of the retainer body adjacent each pocket are formed as a thick walled portion having a radial thickness greater than a radial thickness of the retainer body.

It is respectfully submitted that in its amended form, claim 6 clearly recites that the retainer body is resin-made and further that the fore and aft portions of the retainer body adjacent each pocket are formed as a thick walled portion having a radial thickness greater than the first radial thickness of the retainer body. In contrast, the resin-made main portion 7 of Mutoh '408 has the same radial thickness of the pocket 8. Although, Mutoh '408 shows in Figure 11 a thin walled portion between the elastic pieces 12 disposed on the main portion 7, it is respectfully submitted that this thin portion does not obviate the technical feature of claim 6 where the radial sides are have a radial thickness greater than the retainer body. In Mutoh '408, The elastic pieces 12 have a radial thickness equal to the radial thickness of the main portion 7.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claim 7

Claim 7 has been cancelled.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: October 23, 2007

By: Gregory W. Harper
Gregory W. Harper
Registration No. 55,248

1201 New York Avenue, N.W., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501